



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
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Contact: Lawrence Hajna (609) 984-1795
Lawrence Ragonese (609) 292-2994

CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION APPROVES \$2.2 MILLION IN TRAIL GRANTS

TRENTON – The Christie Administration has approved nearly \$2.2 million in grants for projects that will develop and improve passive and motorized trails across the state, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

Among the passive recreational trail projects funded are a scenic hiking trail on Pennsauken's Petty's Island, creation of an interior trail system at Liberty State Park in Jersey City, a trails connector project linking trails and sites in Morris and Sussex counties, and improvements that will make a portion of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park in Mercer County accessible to people with disabilities.

"The Christie Administration is committed to providing ample opportunities for the public to enjoy the great outdoors in New Jersey," Commissioner Martin said. "These grants, made possible by the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program, will fund great recreational trail projects in a wide range of places, from our cities to our suburbs to our woodlands."

The goal of the federal Recreational Trails Program is to improve access to open space, enhance environmental resources, create urban and suburban corridors, and provide additional hiking, biking, horseback riding, and off-highway vehicle opportunities. The grants are administered by the DEP's Green Acres Program. The grant recipients were recommended for funding by the New Jersey Trails Council and approved by the Federal Highway Administration. The Trails Council is comprised of representatives from hiking, mountain biking, motorized trail use, canoeing/kayaking and horseback riding interest groups, as well as several general trail advocates and state government representatives.

Passive recreational trail projects receiving funding include:

- \$24,000 to the town of Newton in Sussex County for completion of a critical link of the Sussex Branch Trail that will enable the relocation of the trail from its current on-road alignment to a publicly owned off-road location;
- \$24,000 to Liberty State Park in Hudson County for interior trail development for passive recreation purposes;
- \$24,000 to the Student Conservation Association to repair and improve six miles of trails at Mills Reservation in Essex County;

- \$24,000 to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust for trail development on Petty's Island, located in the Delaware River along Pennsauken and Camden. The 4.5-mile trail will include interactive wayside exhibits.
- \$24,000 to Mount Olive Township for a cooperative project with the Borough of Stanhope and the DEP's Division of Parks and Forestry to improve trail connections between the municipalities, the Morris Canal Towpath, the Sussex Branch Trail, the Highlands Trail, Lake Musconetcong, and the Netcong Train Station.
- \$10,756 to assist the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife in opening a new section of the Cape Island Wildlife Management Area in Lower Township for public use. Funds will be used to extend a road to a parking area and develop a 1,000-foot trail link to an existing 3.6-mile trail network that was developed by nearby schools. Funds will also be used for additional trail signage.
- \$16,000 to Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park in Mercer County for the purchase of materials and rental of equipment to construct an access to improve access for people with disabilities to a two-mile section park trail in the vicinity of the Port Mercer Canal House.

The Federal Highway Administration provides financial assistance to states for developing and maintaining trails and trail facilities. The funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, and come from a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use. Funding is contingent upon congressional authorization or extension of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Surface Transportation Bill.

Since the program's inception in 1993, New Jersey has awarded more than \$14.5 million to federal, state, county, and local governments, as well as nonprofit groups. Of the funding available each year, 30 percent is allocated for non-motorized trail projects, 30 percent to motorized trail projects, and 40 percent for diversified use trail projects. Recipients are required to provide a 20 percent matching share for each project.

Applications for the next round of competitive federal grants are now being accepted by the DEP for consideration for funding in 2013 to develop, maintain, improve trails and operate trails throughout New Jersey. The deadline to apply to the DEP is February 15.

The funds can be used to improve access to open space, enhance environmental resources, create urban and suburban corridors and provide additional hiking, biking, horseback riding, and off-highway vehicle opportunities.

Federal, state, county and local governments and nonprofit groups are eligible for the federal funds. To learn more about the state's vision, goals and action plan for recreational and motorized trail development or to apply for a 2013 grant, visit www.trails.nj.gov